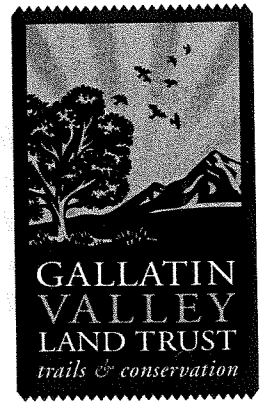


February ??, 2009



**From:** Ted Lange, GVLТ Community Trails Program

**To:** Gallatin County Planning Board

**Subject:** Transportation Amendments to Gallatin County Subdivision Regulations

Planning Board Members,

GVLТ strongly supports county regulations to guide construction of sidewalks and trails in new subdivisions and we are very encouraged to see such regulations included in the proposed transportation amendments to Gallatin County's Subdivision Regulations. Below are recommendations for specific changes to improve the proposed regulations.

In recent years, many areas of the County such as the Four Corners area, Big Sky, and the Bozeman area have been rapidly urbanizing. GVLТ believes that a well-planned network of sidewalks and trails is critically important for both public safety and quality of life for these growing communities. The tremendous effort that goes into the careful planning of our roadways must also include thoughtful and serious consideration and planning for non-motorized transportation. Sidewalks and trails should not be treated as a luxury or an afterthought:

**Sidewalks** - Sidewalks are an essential element of our infrastructure. Children, families, the elderly and people with disabilities should have sidewalks for traveling within their neighborhoods, as well as safe and viable bicycle-pedestrian routes connecting their homes with schools, parks and commercial areas. Without sidewalks, children are forced to play in the street, and families, the elderly, and people with disabilities are forced to walk in the street if they choose to walk anywhere.


**Trails** - Like sidewalks, trails also benefit public safety by providing safe walking and biking opportunities. Beyond these public safety benefits, GVLТ believes that by building trails we build community. When neighborhoods have greenway trails where people can walk, ride bicycles and if appropriate ride horses, these trails provide neighbors with an opportunity to connect with each other and with the natural environment. When greenway trails are connected to other neighborhoods and destinations such as commercial areas and schools they can provide a valuable non-motorized transportation network. Trails are highly valued by homebuyers. *In recent years, the National*

recommend adding language to this section expressing a strong preference for sidewalks and clearly defining circumstances under which it would be appropriate to substitute trails for sidewalks.

In cases where trails are substituted for sidewalks, we recommend the following considerations:

- **All Weather Surface** – Sidewalks are particularly valuable in wintertime for providing a safe place to walk off of snowy/icy streets that are dangerous for all pedestrians and often impassable for the elderly or people with disabilities. If a trail is substituted for a sidewalk it is critical for it to have an all weather surface that can be plowed.
- **Minimum Width** -
- **Mid-Block Crossings** -

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Lange". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "T" and a cursive "Lange".

Sincerely,  
Ted Lange, GVLТ Staff